

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 16, 2022

Hon. Robert J. Fenton, Jr.
National Monkeypox Response Coordinator
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Fenton,

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to combat the monkeypox outbreak occurring in communities across the United States. As we face significant challenges in the days ahead to combat the ongoing monkeypox outbreak, the Administration's efforts to address inequities in our public health system must remain a top priority. That is why we urge you to take all possible measures to ensure and prioritize the equitable distribution of monkeypox vaccines, testing, and therapeutics among at-risk groups that have been historically disadvantaged.

We have seen throughout the COVID-19 pandemic the exacerbation of the systemic inequities plaguing our healthcare system. Our nation's most vulnerable communities have disproportionately borne the brunt of the pandemic's harshest effects, and monkeypox is having a similar impact on these communities too. Recently, many U.S. cities have seen an uptick in monkeypox cases, which is an ominous reminder of the shortcomings in our public health infrastructure exposed during the earliest days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As representatives of the American people, we have a moral imperative to look out for the most vulnerable Americans: low-income individuals, those without access to reliable internet, those working non-traditional hours, and those without access to means of transportation. We also wish to emphasize our concern for the MSM and LGBTQ+ community, who comprise up to 99% of confirmed monkeypox cases by some estimates, and especially for those living in communities where they may face threats resulting from the stigma associated with acquiring this vaccine.¹

Although thousands of people across the country have already received the monkeypox vaccine, there is still significant work to do to avert a worst case-scenario for our most vulnerable populations. We encourage the Administration to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to use all available resources to ensure our communities remain healthy and safe. We stand ready to support you in this effort.

Sincerely,



Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/07/27/monkeypox-who-recommends-gay-bisexual-men-limit-sexual-partners-to-reduce-spread.html>



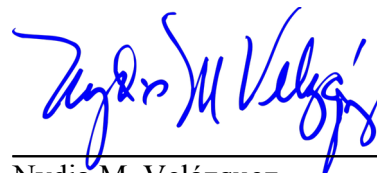
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Ayanna Pressley
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Nikema Williams
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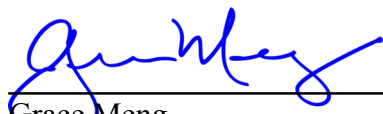
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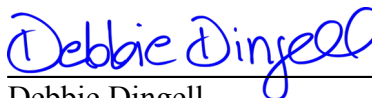
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David N. Cicilline
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Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
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